1: Tew E-4 (no date) 1950 FT7 Yao FT7

return to the *lupanda*, where the initiates are welcomed by their friends. An essential part of the ceremony which takes place at this stage is the exhibition of animal shapes made by the *m'mwiru*, with mounds of earth outlined in flour. These animal shapes differ from lodge to lodge. On the last night before the return to the village the initiates undergo a ceremonial bathing, each boy being carried to the stream by a woman, who thereafter is addressed as 'elder sister'. Finally, with new names, and freshly oiled and decorated, they march to the chief's village to be redeemed by him from the *m'mwiru* with gifts of cloth. After initiation it is a deadly insult to call a boy by his child-name. All who pass through initiation together consider themselves bound by mutual obligations of hospitality.[1]

Girls' initiation takes place in three stages. First, there is *ciputu*, the general initiation before puberty, which corresponds to the boys' *lupanda*. It takes place at the same time of year, and though it lasts for less than a week, its conclusion is celebrated at *lupanda* jointly with the conclusion of the boys' initiation. A hut is built in the bush, like the long dormitory of the boys, and four days are spent in dancing and singing. Each girl (aged about eight years) is accompanied by a sponsor, a woman friend who continues to be her mentor during subsequent rites, and who assists in giving the girl instruction in her womanly duties. At the end the girls are bathed and anointed, dressed in new clothes, and each is carried to *lupanda* by her sponsor. Here they prove their skill in dancing and receive gifts from their friends. Ritual defloration follows the *ciputu* initiation.[2] Among Mohammedans, clitoridectomy used to be performed by a woman operator, but, it is said, was discontinued in about 1903 on account of the heavy mortality.[3]

After this first general celebration, first pregnancy and first birth are the occasions of separate rites for each girl. According to some informants there were once two ceremonies connected with pregnancy. One, for the young married men whose wives had not yet conceived, used to take place at the same time as *ciputu*; each man was attended by a woman sponsor not his wife, given good advice, and put through various tests of manhood. Mitchell does not confirm the present existence of this ceremony, but in the old days if a man was betrothed or married to a child going through her *ciputu* he had to accompany her.

The *litimo* ceremony takes place when a young married woman quickens with child for the first time.[4] The woman, with her sponsor and the married women of the neighbourhood, went out in procession for a ceremony of singing and dancing and instruction to the young couple, followed by a feast. Nowadays no men are allowed to attend *litimo*. A child born of a woman who had not undergone this rite used to be buried alive; nowadays her *anyaw mbumba* is charged by the chief.

Finally, six days after the first child is born, its naming ceremony forms a last initiation rite for its mother. The husband is formally led into her hut by her sponsor and the married women of the neighbourhood, and the child is taken out for the first time to the accompaniment of feasting and dancing.

Most Yao men and women act as sponsors of initiates at least once, and all parti-

[1] Sources for boys' initiation: Stannus and Davey, 1913; Werner, 1906, pp. 124-6; Stannus, A, 1910, pp. 247-63; Hetzel, 1935, pp. 19-25; Johnston, 1887, p. 409; Weule, I, 1909, p. 304.

[2] Stannus, A, 1910, p. 259. [3] Ibid., I, 1910, p. 256.

[4] Ibid., A, 1910, p. 274; Hetzel, 1935, p. 25, calls it *simuko* (belly).

generous and popular, the donations may mount up to a useful sum. Dancing goes on late into the afternoon when all return to the village. 843

The man may not speak to his guardian again until after the birth of the child. The two women guardians, the *nkamussi* and the *nahenya*, as a rule cease sexual intercourse with their husbands during the same period or, at all events, during the last month before the birth of the child.

The child born of a woman who has not gone through *Lilime* is buried alive. [847]

Chieftainship. The Yao when they migrated to their present country were headed by a number of their chiefs. These eventually settled in different areas adjacent to one another, each ruling over a considerable tract of country. The chief was supported by a number of headmen, each of whom looked after a village; the chiefs and headmen in turn being assisted by the village elders. 622 643

Often among a chief's counselors one found a number of his relatives, and sons and brothers were often made headmen. A man assuming chieftainship often had to dispose of a brother of whom he was afraid. 643

Chieftainship is hereditary, the chief's name being passed on to each successor. Succession is to eldest son of the eldest sister or a son of some other sister. Failing these, it passes to a grand-nephew. If there is no acceptable adult nephew, a full brother may succeed.

Macdonald's account of the Malemya's succession[1] is, I believe, incorrect. The old Malemya (*Nalutumbo*) was succeeded according to custom by his nephew, Kanzola who, as Malemya, was called Ndalama. Kuntaja was not a younger brother of Nalutumbo or Kanzola, but a cousin of the latter. Ndalama was succeeded by a nephew, not the eldest but the second son of a sister, the eldest having already succeeded to the chieftainship of Kuntaja was therefore ineligible. The present Malemya will be succeeded by a grand-nephew, the son of a daughter of his eldest sister, his sister having no sons. [114]

A successor inherited all the wives and slaves of the deceased chief and all his goods and chattels, guns, ivory and gardens. Any small possessions might be divided among the deceased's children and in the case of guns, those who had always used them often laid claims not to be separated from their weapons; these claims were often allowed by the new chief. 643 428

In the same way, any ordinary man's successor is his nephew, the son of a sister, who inherits all goods and chattels and slave wives, but not free-born wives, nor gardens, which go to the free wives. Stock is generally divided among the children.

Before 1891, when a British Protectorate was formally declared over Nyasaland, each chief ruled supreme. He was consulted as to the dates for *Unyago*; he directed the harvesting, etc.; he proclaimed war and generally was paramount among his people. It will be seen, therefore, that he was a busy man, but he received no direct remuneration. His wealth consisted of slaves and ivory. Slaves he obtained in warfare and as blood money. 643 [554]

[1] Op. cit., vol. i, p. 180.